information similar to the above about Metcalfe's refusal to go out except at night. Perhaps this information was volunteered by Herbert Metcalfe himself, as Dr. Burns appears to have quoted his statement that people were "looking at him." Under "facts ... communicated to me by others" Dr. Burns merely indicates his having received information from Metcalfe's father which "corroborates" the above observations.

A "Probational Bond," signed by Metcalfe's father, indicates that Herbert Metcalfe was released into custody on January 23, 1883.

Herbert Metcalfe's admission file contains a letter by himself, dated November 9, 1882, or about a week before his committal. This amounts to a self-diagnosis considerably more sophisticated than the ones above.

He writes as if to a police detective, or a similar authority, informing him of an alleged "case of poisoning," which he eventually reveals to be his own. First, however, he states some information about his family and himself, such as his father's currently being an employee of the Massey Manufacturing Company in Toronto, and having worked for the same company in Newcastle, where he himself was first afflicted with what he calls "extreme nervousness."

To many readers Metcalfe's symptoms of poisoning would indicate something else. His diagnosis, with its wealth of detailed first-hand information, lends itself to alternate interpretations, unhampered and possibly helped by his entertaining an obviously implausible hypothesis. He becomes the kind of narrator who seems unable to draw the obvious moral from experience that resembles a parable to everyone but himself, to whom it is an utterly different story.

It is possibly significant that Metcalfe is first attacked by his "nervousness" in church. While Metcalfe is primarily concerned with nervousness, he indicates in his description of the first attack a preoccupation with appearances or with avoiding being seen, that to many would itself appear to be a more significant symptom of a worse disorder. His reactions to his symptoms are more significant than the symptoms themselves, indeed are more pathologically "symptomatic." At the same time, they make the reader self-consciously aware of his own arbitrary role in constituting disease.